

State Personnel Board Professional Coaching Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is coaching?

Professional Coaching is a professional partnership between a qualified coach and an individual *or team* that supports the achievement of relevant goals set by the individual or team. Through the process of coaching, participants focus upon the skills and actions needed to successfully produce the desired outcome.

The participant chooses the focus area, while the coach listens and contributes observations and questions as well as concepts and principles which can assist in generating possibilities and identifying actions. Through the coaching process, the participant achieves the needed clarity to support the most effective actions. Coaching accelerates the individual's or team's progress by providing greater focus and awareness of possibilities leading to more effective choices.

2. What are the benefits of coaching?

Participants who engage in professional coaching can expect to experience enhanced decision making skills, enhanced interpersonal effectiveness, and increased confidence in carrying out their job responsibilities and life roles. Consistent with a commitment to enhancing their personal effectiveness, they can also expect to see appreciable results in the areas of productivity, personal satisfaction with life and work, and the achievement of relevant professional/personal goals.

3. What are some typical reasons someone might work with a coach?

Some of the reasons would include, but not be limited to the following:

- There is a gap in knowledge, skills, confidence, or resources
- A big stretch is being asked or required, and it is time sensitive
- There is a desire to accelerate results
- There is a need for a course correction in work or life due to a setback
- A participant has a style of relating to others that is ineffective or is not supporting the achievement of the desired goal(s)
- There is a lack of clarity and there are choices to be made
- The participant has not identified their core strengths and how to best leverage them
- There is a need to be better organized, less reactive, and more self-managed.

4. What can the participant look at to help him/her determine a relevant focus area for the Professional Coaching Program?

There are several sources that the participant can consult to help determine their focus area with the coach. These can be as informal as discussions between the participant and his/her supervisor. More formal sources would include competency development needs identified in performance appraisal,

individual development plans that reflect current or upcoming demands on the job, and the results from multi-rater assessments (sometimes referred to as 360-degree feedback). The half-day orientation session which begins the Program will guide the participant in reviewing these and other sources to select a focus area.

5. How can the success of professional coaching be measured?

Measurement may be thought of in two distinct ways. First, there are the external indicators of performance: measures which can be seen and measured in the participant's or team's environment. Second, there are internal indicators of success: measures which are inherent within the individual or team members being coached and can be measured with the support of the coach. Ideally, both internal and external measures are incorporated.

Examples of external measures include: achievement of coaching goals established at the outset of the relationship, performance feedback obtained from a sample of the participant's constituents (i.e. direct reports, colleagues, boss), business performance data (i.e. productivity, accuracy, turnaround time). The external measures selected should ideally be things the participant is already measuring and are things that the participant has some ability to directly influence.

Examples of internal measures include self-scoring/self-validating assessments that can be administered initially and at regular intervals in the coaching process, changes in the participant's self-awareness and awareness of others, shifts in thinking which inform more effective actions, and shifts in one's emotional state which inspires confidence.

6. Will the coaching sessions be conducted over the phone or in person?

Coaching sessions will be conducted over the phone to maximize both the participant and coach's time. This makes the orientation session at the beginning of the program more important since it allows participants to connect with the coach face to face prior to their telephone sessions. We recognize that some participants will respond more favorably to in-person sessions and will consider this option.